

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please add or amend the claims to read as follows, and cancel without prejudice or disclaimer to resubmission in a divisional or continuation application claims indicated as cancelled:

1. **(Currently Amended)** A maneuverable device for transporting a load over a surface, comprising:

a platform for supporting a load to be transported;

a base comprising a plurality of castors;

at least one auxiliary wheel mounted for rotation about at least one fixed axis with respect to said base;

a power unit configured for providing motive power to said at least one auxiliary wheel;

a driving unit for steering said device, wherein the driving unit operates independently of said at least one auxiliary wheel; and

a wheeled support connected to the platform for supporting a user during operation of the platform.

2. (Original) Device according to claim 1, comprising a deployment/retraction mechanism for selectively deploying and retracting said at least one auxiliary wheel with respect to said surface, wherein when deployed said at least one auxiliary wheel is in traction contact with said surface, and wherein when retracted said at least one auxiliary wheel is distanced away from said surface.

3-4. **(Canceled)**

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5. (Original) Device according to claim 1, wherein said platform is mounted to said base by means of a pair of longitudinally spaced support columns.

6-8. (Cancelled)

9. (Original) Device according to claim 1, wherein said driving unit is retractably mounted to said platform.

10-16. (Cancelled)

17. (Original) Device according to claim 1, wherein said castors are configured to selectively operate in any one of at least two modes, including a neutral mode and a brake mode.

18-28. (Cancelled)

29. (Original) Device according to claim 1, wherein said device is in the form of a bed for transporting a patient along a ground surface.

30-31. (Cancelled)

32. (Currently amended) A maneuverable device for transporting a load over a surface, comprising:

a platform for supporting a load to be transported;

a base comprising a plurality of castors;

at least one auxiliary wheel mounted for rotation about at least one fixed axis with respect to said base;

a driving unit for steering said apparatus, wherein the driving unit operates independently of said at least one auxiliary wheel a steering mechanism for collectively steering said plurality of castors in responsive to a controlling input from said driving unit; and
a wheeled support connected to the platform for supporting a user during operation of the platform.

33. (Original) Device according to claim 32, wherein said castors are configured to selectively operate in any one three modes, including a neutral mode, a steering mode and a brake mode.

34-35. (Cancelled)

36. (Original) Device according to claim 32, further comprising a steering system for collectively steering said plurality of castors in the steering mode responsive to a controlling input from said driving unit.

37-39. (Cancelled)

40. (Original) Device according to claim 32, wherein said device is in the form of a bed for transporting a patient along a ground surface,

41-42. (Cancelled)